

European Patent Application

"Instant Messaging System"

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Abstract

10 The present invention relates to a system that enables the nearly real-time transmission  
of messages originated and received from/by heterogeneous communication networks.  
The purpose of instant messaging is to transmit high priority messages in (nearly) real-  
time between clients (man and machine). Unified messaging merges analog and digital  
transmitted messages such as facsimile, voice mail, e-mail, WWW and the cell phone  
15 short message service (GSM/SMS) to unified instant messages. A Unified Instant  
Messaging System (UIMS) consists of four major components: distributed gateways,  
message brokers, message processors and a client directory database. Messages of  
arbitrary form can be translated into Unified Instant Messages (UIM) by Instant  
Message Gateways (IMGateways). Instant Message Brokers (IMBrokers) control the  
20 message flow and further message processing. IMBrokers also ensure message  
authenticity and security. Further processing steps on an instant message can be  
performed anywhere in the IP network by Instant Message Processors (IMP) provided  
by Instant Message Service Providers (IMSP).

25 (Fig. 1)